

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### INTERIOR AGENCY NAMES NEW CHIEF FOR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

William C. Reffalt, 43, has been tapped by Director Lynn A. Greenwalt of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to head up the world's largest network of public lands managed especially for the benefit of wildlife.

As chief of the Division of National Wildlife Refuges, Reffalt will provide staff direction for the operation and management of 410 refuges, two unique wildlife monuments in Alaska, and 135 Waterfowl Production Areas located in the pothole country of the upper Midwest. He will also be responsible for developing and recommending policies and objectives for the 83 million-acre refuge system.

"Bill Reffalt is noted for his intense dedication to the Fish and Wildlife Service and for an equally intense commitment to accomplishment," Greenwalt said. "His traits as an activist and a leader will make him an effective advocate in Washington for the interests of the National Wildlife Refuge System--a system rich in tradition that is the model for other wildlife preserves around the world."

Reffalt said his primary goals will be to help guide the refuges as a unified system, to stimulate public understanding and recognition of the function of national wildlife refuges, and to implement the policy recommendations for their operation approved last May by Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus.

"The American people can be proud of this system, which we pioneered," Reffalt said. "I want to instill in people's minds that refuges serve a public need and the national interest. It's also important for the public to know what our policies are in operating these multiple-value lands--and why."

Prior to accepting his new post, Reffalt spent eight years as the Service's representative to the Department on the Alaska natural resource and land planning effort and as Chief of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Staff. Director Greenwalt commended him for his role in support of the President's decision to create two major national wildlife monuments--a new concept--and Secretary Andrus' recent decision to withdraw 12 new refuges in Alaska.

"These are exciting additions to the refuge system that add new dimensions--and demands--to the management of the Nation's fish and wildlife in their natural habitat. Bill's role in this process has resulted in fish and wildlife resources being given equal weight for the first time with other natural resources in long range planning," Greenwalt said.

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A native of Denver, Colorado, Reffalt received a bachelor of science degree in wildlife management from Colorado State University. Since joining the Service in 1963, he has worked in refuge management at the Deer Flat and Minidoka National Wildlife Refuges in Idaho, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in Utah, and as refuge manager of the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico. He was selected for the Departmental Manager Development Program and afterwards spent four years in the Albuquerque Regional Office with the Federal Aid program before becoming a Regional Refuge Biologist.

Reffalt and his wife, Christine, live in Herndon, Virginia.

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"Year of the Coast"